

Minutes
Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee
June 25, 2014

Attendance:

Karen Herr, Mason County Auditor
Fina Ormond, Mason County Election Superintendent
Terri Jeffreys, Mason Co. Commissioner
Kevin Frankeberger, Citizen
Becky Frankeberger, Citizen
Amy Davis, League of Women Voters
Chuck Orthmann, Citizen

Karen Herr called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Karen asked everyone to introduce themselves.

Karen talked about the new elections processing room and its efficiencies and improved workflow.

Fina took a few minutes to describe the benefits of the new “Democracy Live” software which Mason County recently acquired. We currently issue UOCAVA (military and overseas civilians) ballots by email or regular mail. Using “Democracy Live,” our registered UOCAVA voters can vote online, print out, sign their ballot, and return by email or mail. This software could eventually lead to emailing ballots to our disabled voters, eliminating the use of the AVU and allowing people to vote in the privacy of their own home and return their ballot by e-mail. Coming to the Mason County Auditor’s office via transit bus is very time consuming and often difficult for the disabled. Eventually, we would hope to expand on-line voting to all voters but security is still a huge concern. Fina asked the Frankebergers if they would like to be a part of beta testing of “Democracy Live.” They are both eager to assist in the testing process.

Karen notified the committee that we have installed a new ballot box in Kamilche in front of Fire District 4. Mason County currently has six ballot drop boxes in the county.

The Secretary of State’s office does a formal review of each county’s elections department once every five years. Representatives from the Secretary of State’s office recently completed Mason County’s audit and we received an excellent rating. Our Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee and community outreach were areas specifically mentioned as exceptional. At the recent Annual Elections Conference in Spokane, Mason County was asked to make a presentation regarding our outreach programs held at the Farmers Market in Shelton and St David’s Life Line Center where we registered many of our homeless population. After our registration drive, we returned a week later to allow them to vote.

Fina lead a discussion regarding other voter outreach ideas we might pursue such as county employees riding Mason County Transit to Olympia or Belfair and registering people to vote while riding the bus. We also have a bi-lingual employee in the Auditor's office that could assist us in registering people in our Hispanic community. Once the new transit center opens downtown, perhaps we could use that facility to register new voters. It was also suggested that we work closely with North Mason Resource Center in Belfair to help register the homeless in the north end of the county.

The meeting adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Minutes submitted by Betty Wing